

GUIDELINES FOR COORDINATOR FOR EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED

GENERAL INFORMATION

Disability retirement determinations are made in accordance with civil service retirement regulations. A finding of entitlement to disability retirement benefits is made only when the information submitted with the application shows that an employee is unable to perform useful and efficient service because of disease or injury (1) in the employee's current position or (2) within a vacant position, in the same agency and commuting area at the same grade or pay level and tenure, for which the employee is qualified for reassignment. Useful and efficient service means fully successful performance of the critical or essential elements of the position (or the ability to perform at that level) and satisfactory conduct and attendance.

The disability retirement application must contain documentation that specifically demonstrates:

1. A deficiency in service with respect to performance, attendance or conduct, or, in the absence of any actual service deficiency, a showing that the medical condition is incompatible with either useful service or retention in the position.
2. A medical condition, which is defined as a disease or injury.
3. A relationship between the service deficiency and the medical condition such that the medical condition has caused the service deficiency.
4. The duration of the medical condition, both past and expected, and a showing that the condition, in all probability, will continue to be disabling for at least one year from the receipt of the application by OPM.
5. The applicant's inability to perform useful and efficient service arose while the employee was serving under the Civil Service Retirement System.
6. The inability of the employing agency to make reasonable accommodation to the employee's medical condition.
7. The absence of another available position, within the employing agency and commuting area at the same grade or pay level and tenure, to which the employee is qualified for reassignment.

The law requires that where an employee who otherwise would be eligible for disability retirement initiates an application, the agency must review all vacant positions under its jurisdiction at the same grade or pay level and tenure and in the same commuting area, to determine if the employee meets the minimum qualification standards. The purpose of this law is to encourage the retention of disabled employees in positions for which they are qualified to continue productive employment.

INSTRUCTIONS

The Coordinator for Employment of the Handicapped should review the Applicant's Statement, the Supervisor's Statement, the Physician's Statement, and any other relevant documentation on file to determine if reasonable accommodation will enable the employee to perform fully successful service in his or her current position or whether a vacant position is available in the agency, at the same grade or pay level in the same commuting area, for which the employee is qualified for reassignment. Telephone numbers for the applicant, the supervisor, and the physician may be found on their respective statements, should it be necessary to contact them for further information.

ALL ITEMS MUST BE COMPLETED. IN ADDITION, FOR ITEMS 4, 5, AND 6, IF YOU CHECK A BOX THAT REQUIRES ADDITIONAL EXPLANATION, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE PROVIDED THE EXPLANATION AND/OR THE ATTACHMENT. FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE FORM PROPERLY WILL DELAY THE PROCESSING OF THE DISABILITY APPLICATION AT OPM.

Accommodation - Guidance for determining reasonable accommodations may be found in the following publications:

- Federal Personnel Manual, Chapter 306
- Handbook on Reasonable Accommodations (PMS 720A)
- Handbook of Job Analysis for Reasonable Accommodations (PMS 720B)

The documentation supporting your response to item 4 on the other side must include an assessment of the functional and environmental factors related to the employee's inability to perform at the fully successful level, unless there were no medical restrictions.

Reassignment - Guidance related to reassignment of an applicant for disability retirement is published in:

- Federal Personnel Manual Supplement 830-1, CSRS and FERS Handbook for Personnel and Payroll Offices, Chapter 60, Disability Retirement.

After completing and certifying this form and attaching the appropriate documentation, you should return the original to the employee or to your personnel office according to instructions and practices in your agency. In either case, **A COPY MUST BE GIVEN TO THE EMPLOYEE.** Please **DO NOT** send the form directly to OPM unless OPM specifically requested you to do so in this case.

THE AGENCY'S OBLIGATION TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO ACCOMMODATE OR REASSIGN THE EMPLOYEE DOES NOT CEASE WITH THE FILING OF THIS CERTIFICATION. Your efforts should continue until your agency receives OPM's decision on the application. If the accommodation or reassignment situation changes after the original filing of the certification, you must notify OPM of the changes.

If necessary, you may be contacted by OPM for additional information or clarification.